

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully solicited.

Claims 1 through 19 are pending, with Claims 1 through 7, 18, and 19 being independent. Claims 7 through 19 were withdrawn from consideration.

The Official Action sets forth a restriction requirement and requires election for prosecution on the merits of one of the following groups of claims: Group I (Claims 1, 3, and 5) and Group II (Claims 2, 4, and 6).

In response to the restriction requirement, Applicant provisionally elects Group I (Claims 1, 3, and 5) with traverse, and requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the requirement. Applicant submits that all of the claims could be searched by one Examiner without undue effort. Applicant also believes that it is not mandatory to make a restriction requirement in every possible situation. Applicant believes that if one Examiner acts on all of the claims of the present application, overall examining time will be less than if multiple Examiners are involved. Applicant also earnestly believes that the examination of all of the claims by one Examiner in the present application will best ensure uniform prosecution quality. Therefore, in the interest of prosecution economy of time and quality for both the Office and Applicant, Applicant respectfully submits that withdrawal of the restriction requirement in this application is appropriate.

Applicant submits that this application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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